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(Washington, D.C.) - Today, Congressman Albio Sires condemned the decision of Venezuela's president, Hugo Chavez, and Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa, to militarize their borders with Colombia.

On Sunday, March 2, 2008, President Chavez and President Correa began militarizing their countries' borders with Colombia in reaction to Colombia's raid on the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), including the killing of a top rebel leader, Raul Reyes, across the Ecuadorian border.

"This is just the most recent action in Chavez' attempt to destabilize the region and enflame the already difficult situation facing Colombia as it fights against the destructive guerilla groups, such as the FARC. The situation unfolding in the Andean region must be watched closely, and Chavez's interference must be seen as a serious threat to security and partnership in the region," stated Congressman Sires.

The Congressman added, "I am deeply concerned with Chavez's escalating military threats in the region, and I am alarmed to hear reports that President Correa may have a relationship with the FARC."

Congressman Sires also sent a letter to Secretary Rice asking the U.S. State Department to condemn the actions of President Chavez and President Correa and support Colombia.

In addition, Congressman Sires sent a letter to the Committee on Foreign Affairs Acting Chairman Berman and Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere Chairman Engel asking that the Committee on Foreign Affairs hold a hearing in order to discuss the irresponsible actions and destabilizing efforts of President Chavez. He also requests that his colleagues in Congress stand behind Colombia.

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